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Hurricane season in full swing

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As Hurricane Gustav continues to weaken, attention turns to the east with Hurricane Hanna and Tropical Storm Ike strengthening over the Atlantic Ocean.

The wind speeds associated with Gustav peaked at around 110 miles per hour as the eye of the storm passed over the Louisiana coast. Despite the easing wind, heavy rain is still falling with a continued risk of flooding.

Early September usually marks the peak of the Atlantic tropical storm season and 2008 is proving no exception.

Hanna is currently a Category 1 hurricane with wind speeds of near 80 miles per hour and higher gusts. The predicted path currently takes the storm through the Bahamas, then east of Florida and on towards the coast of Georgia and South Carolina.

The Met Office provides forecast information of tropical storms and hurricanes from its unified model twice daily to its colleagues at the National Hurricane Center (NHC) in Miami. This valuable information is used by forecasters in the NHC when compiling the official forecasts of track and landfall of hurricanes and tropical storms such as Gustav, Hanna and Ike and the issue of warnings to affected areas.

The Met Office has a responsibility to protect the lives of British citizens abroad and issues regular briefings to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) for tropical cyclones around the globe throughout the year. In addition the Met Office provides forecast information to humanitarian agencies and the insurance industry, giving advanced notice for mitigating action.

The latest forecast tracks can be found at the National Hurricane Center website.

North America satellite image

More about tropical cyclones

Notes:

- The Met Office is also providing forecast information on the progress of Gustav and Hanna to government departments to help deal with the situation. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department for International Development (DFID) are responsible for issuing advice to British Nationals in the area.

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